

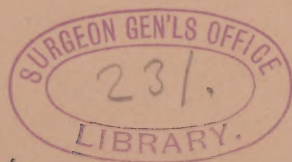
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A PART OF THE NAVAJO'S MYTHOLOGY.

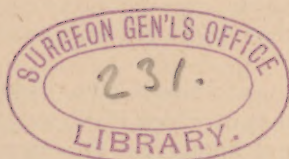
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BY W. MATTHEWS.

(Acting, &c.)

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Presented by
the author.



A PART OF THE NAVAJO'S MYTHOLOGY.

BY W. MATTHEWS.

The world in which we now live is the fifth world. Our fathers dwelt in four worlds before reaching this. In the the first world there dwelt three ; the first man, the first woman and the coyote. It was dark there and the world was small, so they ascended to the second world. On the second world they found two other men ; the Sun and the Moon. There was then no sun or moon in the firmament ; but these people are so called because they afterwards became the sun and the moon (or the sun and moon gods). Yet there was light in the second world. In the east there was a great darkness ; it was not a cloud, but it was like a cloud. In the south there was blue light ; in the west a yellow light and in the north a white light. At times the darkness would rise in the east until it overspread the whole sky and made the night. Then the darkness would sink down, the blue light would rise gradually in the south, the yellow light in the west and the white light in the north, until they met in the zenith, and made the day.

Then there were five dwellings on the face of the second world : first man, first woman, sun, moon and coyote. After a time sun approached first woman, and coyote, who was the wisest of all, and knew all things whether he beheld them or not, told first man what had happened, and first man became angry with sun. Now, at this time, there dwelt beyond the earth, in its four corners four other persons. One was he of the darkness in the east ; another was he of the blueness in the south, another was he of the yellowness of the west, and the last was he of the whiteness in the north. And the five that dwelt in the center of the world, called these four into council, concerning the cause of their discord. The decision

of the council was that the second world was too small for all to live upon in peace, and that they should ascend to the third world, which was larger, and where first woman and sun could live so far apart that they might never meet one-another again.

When they came up to the third world, they found it a land, in form much like that in which the Navajos now dwell, bounded, like their present home, by four mountains. There was one mountain on the east like San Mateo, one on the south like the heights beyond the Salt Lake of the Zuñis, one in the west like San Francisco mountain, and one on the north like the mountains of San Juan. And they found a great water at each of these four points.

But the land into which they came was not empty; another race of people dwelt in the mountains, and they called the people of the mountains into council and said to them: "We have come to this land to stay a long time and we desire to live at peace with you." And they of the mountains said: "It is well; the land is wide enough for us all, and we seek not war; but there lives in the great water beyond the eastern mountains, a monster named, Tièholtsòdi, (he who seizes you in the sea,) whom we warn you not to approach or harm." The Navajos promised to heed this warning and the council broke up. But the coyote listened to no one, and he went where he chose, none controlled him. So, in time he strayed to the great water beyond the eastern mountain, stole two of the children of the ocean monster, brought them back into camp unperceived and hid them in his blankets.

When Tièholtsòdi missed his young he went in search of them. He sought in the great waters at the four corners of the earth, but found them not, so he, at length, came to the conclusion that they must be in the possession of the strangers who had recently come from the lower world. Then he caused the waters that were in the east, the south, the west, and the north to rise and flow over the land; so that at the end of the second day there was but little dry land left for the people to stand on. They all became greatly alarmed and held a council. They knew they must have done some wrong; but what the crime or who the culprit, they could not discover.

Then they took soil from all of the four corner mountains of the world, and placed it on top of the mountain that stood in the north, and thither they all went including the people of the mountains, the salt-woman, and such animals as then dwelt on the third world. When the soil was laid on the mountain the latter began to grow higher and higher, but the waters continued to rise and the people climbed upwards to escape the flood.

At length the mountain ceased to grow and they planted on the summit a great reed, into the hollow of which they all entered. The reed grew every night but it did not grow in the day time; and this is the reason why the reed grows in joints to this day—the hollow internodes show where it grew by night, and the solid nodes show where it rested by day. Thus the waters gained on them in the daytime. The turkey was the last to take refuge in the reed and, therefore, he was at the bottom. When the waters rose high enough to wet the turkey they all knew that danger was near. Often did the waves wash the end of his tail; and it is for this reason that the tips of the turkey's tail-feathers are, to this day, lighter than the rest of his plumage. At the end of the fourth night from the time it was planted, the reed had grown up to the floor of the fourth world, and here they found a hole through which they passed to the surface.

In the fourth world they had still the darkness of the east, and the *three great lights*, as in the second world; and they found the mountains and seas distributed as in the third world. A great river ran through the centre of the land; on the north bank of this, the people settled, while the lower animals, who were but human beings in animal shape, dwelt on the south side.

In those days the seasons were much shorter than they are now. A year then was but as a day in our time, the children grew to be men and women, and became fathers and mothers in a period that would now be considered but a few days. So the people multiplied rapidly in numbers and dwelt at peace under twelve chiefs until again disturbances arose concerning the infidelity of woman; and the men and women had a war of words. The women said: "We depend not on our husbands, it is they who depend on us. We till the soil and carry the water; we make the fire and weave the blankets; we can take care of ourselves and will, therefore, do as we please." The men said; "It is we who clear the fields and help to till them; we kill game for you, and guide and assist you in all your labors; you cannot live without us." So the arguments continued until the sexes agreed to separate; and the men built a boat and crossed over to the south side of the river, leaving the women in possession of the cultivated fields.

This separation lasted four years. In the first year, as the men had to make new farms, they had a very small crop; while the women, having land already cleared and ditched, had an abundant yield; and they jeered at and taunted the men for their short comings. The second year the men had a better crop, while the women, who had prepared no new land, had

hardly sufficient corn for their increasing needs. Besides the men were among game and killed abundance of it, while the women had no meat to eat. At the end of the fourth year, the men were fat and prosperous while the women were starving, and many of the latter called across the river and begged to be taken back. Then the men whose hearts were softened, met in council, and many urged that the women be forgiven; but while they were still debating some of the women jumped into the river, intending to swim over, and were lost to sight under the waters. This decided the men. So they made boats and took the women across the river, and said to them: "You have now learned something that you must remember. You supposed yourselves to be as strong, as willing, and as wise as we; but you now see that you are not and that you cannot live without us." And the women answered: "Your words are true. We will hearken to you for evermore." Many of the men took back their old wives, but as a number of boys and girls had grown to maturity during the separation, new alliances were contracted.

But all this time the coyote had still kept hidden the young of the sea-monster, *Tiè holtsòdi*, and the latter having searched for them in vain in all the seas of the fourth world, caused the waters to rise as before. Again was the council held; again was soil taken from the four mountains; once more the northern mountain rose and the reed was planted on its summit; once more the reed sheltered the fugitives and bore them upwards out of danger. In short all the circumstances that attended their flight from the third world was repeated until they reached the floor of the present world, when an appalling difference was observed. Instead of finding a hole through which they could pass, as on the former occasion, all above them, as far as they could see, was solid earth, like the roof of a great cavern.

They were dismayed for still the waters gained upon them. Then the badger spoke and said he thought he could help them out of their troubles, so he climbed up the reed to the earthen roof overhead, delved upwards and soon was out of sight. After a time he came down again and said that he had dug through the earth, but had emerged at the bottom of a lake and could go no further. As a proof of his truth he showed his feet and legs soiled with the black, soft mud, and thus it is, that the badger's feet are black to this day.

Again their distress and disappointment was great, when the locust came forward and said, that he could pass to the surface of the upper waters. So up he went through the hole the badger had made. When he arrived at the surface of the lake

he saw four swans, which were placed and colored as the lights and darkness of the lower world. A black swan in the east, a blue swan in the south, a yellow swan in the west, a white swan in the north. They approached the locust and asked him wherefore he had come to their country. In reply he told them of all the misfortunes that had happened to the dwellers in the nether world, and showed how important it was that they should get access to this world without delay. "Well," said one of the swans, "your people may come up here on one condition, and that is that you will do as I do. Behold!" and the swan thrust an arrow down his throat, passed it through the whole length of his body and drew it out behind; he then thrust another arrow through his body in the opposite direction. "Ho!" said the locust, "that is nothing; but now I tell you that you and your brethren can stay here only on one condition, which is that you do as I do." Whereat the locust thrust an arrow from side to side through his body, piercing his heart, and the next moment passed another arrow through in the opposite direction. The swans dared not accept this challenge, so they all arose from the lake and flew away. Then the locust went back to his people and bade them ascend.

So they came up and huddled together on a little shallow spot in the center of the lake; but they had scarcely established themselves here, when, to their horror, they beheld the water again rising, and it seemed to well up from the hole through which the people lately had come. They looked down into the hole and beheld the horns of Tìeholtsòdi; so, once more, they searched among all their bundles and blankets. The last bundle they examined was that of the Coyote, and there they found the stolen cubs. At once they threw them down to their father and with them a sacrifice to the treasures of the sea—their shell ornaments. In an instant, with a noise like a storm in a forest of pines; but louder than that—louder than thunder—the waters began to rush down through the hole and away from the lower worlds.

So the dangers from deluge disappeared; but still they were in trouble, for they could not reach dry land. They prayed to him of the darkness in the east, and he came, and with his knife, shaped like a horn, he cut through the cliffs, which bounded the lake, and made a cañon, through which the waters flowed away.

Still their sorrows ceased not, for the bed of the lake was so soft and muddy that they could not walk through it. So they prayed to the four winds (Wind Gods?) the dark wind of the east, the blue wind of the south, the yellow wind of the west,

and the white wind of the north. And a great gale arose and blew for four days and on the fifth day the ground was so dry that they could walk out.

They wanted to have their new home resemble that which they formerly occupied in the fourth world. So they took clay and placed it at the four corners of the earth, and there it grew to be mountains such as they had below. The sun and moon went into the heavens, and one began to shine in the day and the other in the night.

The mountains that bounded the world were not so far apart then as they are now, hence the world was smaller, and when the sun went over the earth he came much nearer to the surface than he does now. So the first day the sun went on his journey it was intolerably hot, the people were almost burned to death, and they prayed to the four winds, that each one would pull his mountain away from the center of the earth, and thus widen the borders of the world. It was done as they desired, and the seas that bounded the land receded before the mountains. But on the second day, although the weather was milder, it was still too hot, and again were the mountains and seas removed. All this occurred again on the third day; but on the fourth day they found the weather pleasant, and they prayed no more for the earth to be changed.

On the fifth day the sun arose, climbed as usual to the zenith and stopped. The day grew hot and all longed for the night to come, but the sun moved not. Then the wise coyote said: "The sun stops because he has not been paid for his work; he demands a human life for every day that he labors; he will not move again till some one dies." At length a woman, the wife of a great chief, ceased to breathe and grew cold, and while they all drew around in wonder, the sun was observed to move again, and he travelled down the sky and passed behind the western mountain. As we now never see him stop on his way, we know that every day some one must die.

They laid the dead body to rest among the rocks, and all marveled where the living part had gone; so they searched all over the land and among the mountains that bounded the earth, but they found her not until one braver than the rest, ventured to look down into the hole through which they had fled from the lower world, and he beheld her seated by the side of the river combing her hair. Observing that a shadow was thrown from above, she looked up, saw the Indian peeping through the hole and invited him to come down; but he feared to do so. Then she said to him: "Hither have I come and hither all of our people must come when they die." He

returned to camp and told what he had seen and heard; but soon after he fell sick.

That night the moon stopped in the zenith, as the sun had done during the day; and the coyote told the people that the moon also demanded pay and would not move until it was given. He had scarcely spoken, when the man who had seen the departed woman in the nether world died, and the moon, satisfied, journeyed to the west. Thus it is that some one must die every night, or the moon would not move across the sky. But the separation of the tribes occurred immediately after this, and now the moon takes his pay from among the alien races, while the sun demands the life of a Navajo as his fee for passing every day over the earth. And because he who gazed upon the dead met death so soon after, it is not well to look upon the body after it has been buried, and no Navajo has ever again dared to look down into the hole through which they came to this world.

Among the summits of the San Juan mountains there is to-day a lake bounded by precipitous walls, and there is a little island in the center of the lake with a hole in it [extinct crater?] and something sticks out of the hole that looks like the top of a ladder, and "this is the place through which our ancestors emerged from the fourth world." The Navajos never approach near to it, but they stand on high summits around, and view from afar their natal waters.

Until they came up from the fourth world, all the people spoke one language; but when they walked out from the lake their tongues became twisted; they began to speak in diverse ways, and there were many who could not understand one another. So after these deaths occurred they concluded to divide themselves into bands, according to language, and to separate. Those who dwelt in the mountains in the lower world became the people of the mountains. On this other tribes—Utes, Apaches, Pueblos, etc.—went off, each under a different master or guide, who showed them where they were to dwell; but the Navajos remained undisturbed in the center of the earth.

Now, the first man and the first woman thought it would be better if the sky had more lights, for there were times when the moon did not shine at night. So they gathered a number of fragments of sparkling mica of which to make stars; and the first man proceeded to lay out a plan of the heavens, on the ground. He put a little fragment in the north, where he wished to have the star that would never move, and he placed near it seven great pieces, which are the seven stars we behold in the north now. He put a great bright one in the

south, another in the east and a third in the west, and then went on to plan various constellations; when along came the coyote, who, seeing that three of the pieces were red, exclaimed: "These shall be my stars and I will place them where I think best;" so he put them in situations corresponding to places that three great red stars now occupy amid the celestial lights. Before the first man got through with his work, the coyote became impatient, and saying: "Oh! they will do as they are," he hastily gathered the fragments of mica, threw them upwards, and blew a strong breath after them. Instantly they struck the sky. Those to which locations had been assigned adhered in their proper places, but the others were scattered at random, and in formless clusters over the firmament.

Having made the stars, first man and first woman, lengthened the seasons which, before, had been very short, and they caused the moon to so change its form as to mark off the year into twelve parts. They did this in council with Coyote, and the latter laid out the months in a row before him and gave to each one the name it now bears.

The year that these things were done, snow fell for the first time; it was then dry and nutritious like meal, it could be boiled into mush or baked into bread, and the people might have lived on it forever, had not the Coyote, one day, when he was very thirsty and no water was at hand, put some of the snow into a dish and melted it on the fire. Ever since that time snow turns into water when heated and cannot be used as food. When the first woman saw what the Coyote had done she reproached him, saying: "See what folly you have been guilty of. Hereafter the people will have nothing to live on, for you have caused their food to melt into water." "I know more of this than you do," replied coyote. "When the snow melts in the spring it will nourish the grasses on the mountains, and when its water flows into the valleys the people will pour it over their corn-fields and make as good food out of it as it was before I changed it.

It was the coyote who brought from the fourth world the seeds of the corn and other valuable plants, and planted them in the ground for the benefit of the people.

Now, all the tribes of men lived happily and increased in numbers for twelve years; but at the end of that time they had, by their folly and disobedience, so offended the first man and the first woman that the latter determined to chastise them, so she created a number of destroyers. First was *Yëitso*, a being in human shape, taller than any mountain in the Navajo country, and fleet and voracious as he was tall. He had followers

of colossal size, but not as tall as he. The next were two great beings, as male and female, named *Tsináhale*, who had human heads but the wings, plumage, and talons of eagles. They could pounce on a man and bear him off as easily as a hawk carries a little fledgling. Another instrument of vengeance was a great animal called *Délgíth*, who had the form of an antelope, and another was *Tséta-hółtsil-táhli*, a giant who dwelt on the side of a precipice, along the face of which ran a narrow trail much frequented by the Indians. When a man tried to pass along the trail, the giant would kick him into the abyss below. The monster himself could not fall, however, for his hair grew into the rock like the roots of a cedar. Besides these, there were some strange-looking people, *Bináye Ahłni*, who dwelt together in a beautiful house. They had many handsome objects strewn around the door to entice the curious, and other things were displayed inside. When the charmed victim entered he was slain with a mere glance of the eye. These plagues devoured the people until very few were left. The vast ruins scattered everywhere over the Navajo land and beyond it, were once inhabited by Indians, and testify to the great number of the children of men, before the first woman let loose her scourges upon them.

At this time the first man and the first woman lived on a mountain to the northwest of the Navajo country. One day first woman went out and found a female child lying on the ground. Her heart was beginning to soften towards man. She felt that she had wrought evil enough for them, so she took the infant to her house to rear. The girl, *Estsdnatlehi*, took but four days to reach maturity.

On the fifth day she went out for fuel, and when she came back she told her foster-parents (whom she now called "father" and "mother," and who in turn, called her "daughter,") that there had suddenly appeared to her in the woods a man who had stood and looked at her. This occurred four days in succession, and each time first man went out to look for the track of the stranger, but he saw only two foot-prints, as of a man who had taken but one step on the ground; further than this, no trace of his coming or going was visible. On the fifth day the mysterious visitor spoke to the young woman, designated a trysting-place at a little distance from her home, and begged her to meet him there at night. When she went home she related again to her parents the occurrences of the day, and first man went out as before, to examine the tracks. This time there were four foot-prints as of a man who had taken three steps; but the trail seemed to come from nowhere and to lead nowhere. The stranger, therefore, must have descended

from the heavens and returned thither. He was none other than the sun !

That afternoon first man built a small circle or corral of branches (such as these Indians often make) near his house, at the place designated by the sun, and after sunset he sent the maiden out there to pass the night. She built a fire in the corral, and first man and first woman went out to watch from a distance. When darkness had fallen, they saw by the fire-light, the divine stranger entering the corral. Thus he came for four nights and no more.

Four days after his last visit she gave birth to twins, boys, *Nagénazani* and *Thobadëstchin*, who in four days grew to manhood, and for four days more remained near the place of their birth ; but each day they wandered abroad. On the last day during their stroll, they met one of the men of the mountains, and he said to the twins : " Do you know where your father lives ? " When they replied in the negative, he said : " His home is far to the east, beyond *Tsôtsil* " (Mt. San Mateo.) When they came home they asked their mother where their father dwelt ; but her only answer was : " He lives a long way off."

On the morning of the fifth day they set out to find their father. They traveled far to the east, and at noon they arrived at the great house of the sun. A big bear and a long serpent stood guard at the door, but the twins fearing them not, entered. Inside of the lodge sat the wife of the sun, with a boy and a girl who were her children. The woman was alarmed, for visitors rarely entered her house ; but the boy and girl knew who the twins were, and ran up to them in the most friendly manner, calling them by the name of " brother." But fearing the wrath of the sun when he came home, they wrapped the new-comers up in blankets of clouds and laid them on the shelf to hide.

At night, when the sun returned, he said to his wife : " I looked down to-day, about noon, and I saw two men entering the lodge. Who are they and what has become of them ? " " You are the sun," she answered, " and can see all things. Why do you ask me ? " Four times did he ask her, and thrice she gave the same reply, but to the last repetition of the question she said : " Two men came here to-day seeking their father. You have often told me that, during your absence from home, you visit no one. Now who may these men be ? " " Where are they ? " he demanded. " Your other children, perhaps may tell you," responded the woman. Then he turned round to the boy and the girl and bade them reveal the hiding-place of the strangers. They pointed to the shelf. The

sun seized the cloudy bundle, tore it open, and the twins fell out on the floor.

At each of the four corners of the earth were set a cluster of spikes of iron (ferruginous rock, iron ore) as sharp as the teeth of a saw. He seized the twins, and (as was his custom in dealing with intruders) impaled them on the spikes that stood in the east; but the wounds healed at once and the twins did not die. Then, in turn he flung them on the spikes in the south, the west and the north, but without doing them the least harm, and the sun acknowledged them as his own immortal children.

Then he led them back to his lodge, and, opening a door to the east he showed them an enclosure full of horses and said: "My sons, do you want any of these?" "No," said they, "We will not have them." He then opened a door to the south and showed them a room full of beautiful blankets and clothing, of which he offered them all they chose to take, but they said they did not want them. Then he opened a door to the west, and exhibited a great store of beads and shells; and lastly he opened a door in the north, where he had, in a corral, a multitude of deer and other animals of the chase, but all these things they refused. He knew all the time the wish that was in their hearts, but he pretended not to know it. He then asked them what gifts they desired of him, and they said: "Oh, father! Our kindred in the west have been devoured by pitiless monsters. But few of our people are left, and even the lives of these few are in danger. Give us, we beg, the weapons wherewith we may slay our enemies." On a number of pegs, around the wall of his house, hung various warlike weapons and accoutrements. He bade his sons look well at these and point out which ones they wanted. They pointed to a coat of iron (scales of iron ore) to a great knife, to a wind charm or talisman (an object about the size of the finger, half black and half red) and to some thunderbolts. "Then," said the sun: "You must want to kill *Yūtso*, the great giant in the east. Know that he is your brother. Nevertheless, I will give you all these things and assist you to destroy him. When your mission is accomplished you must return all these things to me.

The next morning early he bathed them and arrayed them in new clothing. Then he put on his robe cloud, and, taking one of his sons under each arm he rose into the heavens. When he got into zenith he opened his robe and let them look out, and they saw below them a world different to any they had seen before. At noon they were directly over the summit of Mt. San Mateo, and they stopped to partake of some

food. Here again he let the twins look down at the world. The rivers were like little streaks, and the mountains were only as dark spots upon a flat surface. Then the sun said to the elder brother: "Can you point out your home to me?" But he answered, "I can not." Then he addressed the same question to the younger, and the latter exclaimed, pointing downwards: "There is our home, and there is Mount San Mateo, and there is the Salt lake, and there is the Bear spring, and there is the red streak over the mountain," and so on, pointing out the various localities in the Navajo country.

It is well, said the sun, you will know where to travel when you descend. He continued, "The giant, *Yëitsə*, has a suit of iron clothes, a great knife, thunderbolts, and all the same weapons that I have given you, but he has only four thunderbolts. He dwells in *Tsòtsil* (Mt. San Mateo) and he goes to drink at the spring of *Thòsathō*, which he drinks dry whenever he visits it. He may seem to you more than your match, but I will help you by knocking off his armor with a great thunderbolt." Having said this, he shot the youths down to the top of Mt. San Mateo, with the thunder.

No sooner had they reached the ground than they set out for the spring of *Thòsathō* (Ojo de Gallina, near San Rafael). As they approached the spring they saw *Yëitsə* stooping over it and drinking. When they got near enough to cast their reflections on the water, he looked up and said: "Here are two nice little boys, what will I do with them?" The twins said tauntingly in return: "Here is a fine fat giant, what will we do with him?" Four times were these defiant words repeated on each side, when the giant rose to his feet and hurled one of his thunderbolts at his antagonists. They saw it coming, dropped prone on the ground, and allowed the bolt to pass harmlessly over them. Thus did they evade, in turn, every one of the giant's missiles. When his last one was sped, the promised bolt came down from heaven and rent the magic armor, and the twins fell on the naked monster and hacked him to pieces with their great knives.

His head was chopped off and thrown to a distance, where it was transformed into a hill which stands to-day among the foot-hills of San Mateo. The great torrent of blood that flowed from his body, coagulated into black rock, and can still be seen between the *Thòsathō*, and the base of San Mateo. They knew that if the blood reached the head, where they had thrown it, the giant would come back to life; so they stopped the current in that direction with their knives. A high precipice, where the black rock ends, shows, to this day, where they checked the course of the sanguinary flood. At the spring,

where they had killed *Yëitso*, they found his big basket, in which he was wont to take home the corpses of his victims; in this they put the shattered armor and carried both off as trophies.

When they arrived near their home they laid down the basket and entered the house empty-handed. "Where have you been and what have you done since you left here yesterday?" said their mother, *Es-tsd-na-tle-hi*. "We have been to *Tsôtsil* and have slain *Yëitso*," they answered. She laughed at them, and would not believe them until they led her where they had laid the basket and the armor. Then she was convinced, and they all celebrated the victory with a dance.

Then the young men told their mother that they desired to kill *Delgèth*, the great monster in the shape of an antelope, "That is impossible," she said, "even though you possess the bolts of the thunder and the armor of *Yëitso*. *Delgèth* dwells in the center of a vast plain, surrounded by high hills, therefore, he can see from a long distance any one who approaches him, and he is ever on the alert." Notwithstanding these warnings, the elder brother (*Nagènazani*) set out to slay the great antelope, while the younger (*Thòbadestchin*) remained at home to help his mother.

When the elder came to the edge of the great plain where the monster lived, he met the ground-rat (*Nazīsi*) and told the latter what he came to do. The rat reiterated the story of *Delgèth's* vigilance; but said he thought he could assist in getting rid of him. So the rat dug a long tunnel from the edge of the plain up to where the great antelope lay, making the terminal opening immediately under the heart, and making four branch tunnels near the hole, where the hunter could hide; then he came back and told what he had done.

The adventurous youth entered the tunnel, walked through it to where *Delgèth* lay, and shot him in the heart, but not with immediately fatal effect. The wounded animal arose, stuck one of his horns into the hole and ripped the tunnel open from end to end; but while he was doing this the young man hid himself in the first branch tunnel. The monster returned to the hole and ripped open the first hiding place; but the young hero secreted himself in the second. He ripped open the second tunnel. *Nagènazani* crept into the third. He tore open the third, but the fugitive fled into the fourth. *Delgèth* now stuck his horn into the fourth and proceeded to rip this up too; but before he got to the end where his intended victim was hidden, the wound at last took effect and the great destroyer fell dead.

For a while the victor could scarcely believe that he had actually slain his enemy. He feared to approach the prostrate

form lest the vanquished one, perchance, only feigned death. Presently he beheld the squirrel, whom he asked to go up to the body and examine it. Soon he saw the squirrel climbing up on the great antlers as if he were climbing a tree, and dancing for joy on them to show that *Delgét* was indeed dead. Then the squirrel painted his face with the blood.

Nagénazani cut out a piece of the monster's bowel, filled it with the blood, tied both ends and brought it home to his mother as another trophy, and as an evidence of his victory. And again she rejoiced and had a dance.

Nagénazani next declared his intention to attack the winged monsters, *Tsénáhale* (which I will here call Harpies for the convenience of the reader.) His mother said to him: "They live on the top of a very high *mesa*, whose sides are so steep that no one can climb them. You can not reach the summit unless you have wings, so do not attempt it." Nothing daunted, however, he set forth on his journey, taking with him his thunderbolts and the bag of *Delgét's* blood.

The male of this formidable pair preyed only on men; the female only on women. When *Nagénazani* came in sight of the *mesa* the male harpy flew towards him, swooped down on him and bore him away to his rocky haunt. The monster had his nest on a ledge on one of the sides of the *mesa*, and it was his habit to bear his victims to the summit and let them drop on the ledge, where they were dashed to pieces and eaten by the young. Thus was our hero dropped on the ledge; but, falling uninjured, he tore open the bag of blood and allowed the contents to flow over the rock in order to let the harpy believe he was slain.

The monster then flew off to seek for more prey, and the little harpies approached the man to eat him, but he waved his hand and said "Sh" to them, and they retreated. Thus they approached him four times, but each time they were as easily scared away as at first. When they had retreated for the fourth time he said to them. "When does your mother come back to the nest?" They answered: "When we have a she-rain." (A shower without thunder and lightning is called by the Navajos a she-rain *Niltsa-baäd'*.) "And when does your father return?" He queried. "When we have a he-rain." (A shower with thunder and lightning, *Niltsa-baká*), they replied. As they spoke, the bodies of two Pueblo women fell on the ledge beside him; this showed that the female *Tsénáhale* had returned to the *mesa* from a successful hunt. Presently the body of a man fell on the ledge, indicating that the male had got back.

While the young ones were busy devouring these bodies, drops of rain began to fall, lightning flashed, and, as the

young birds had predicted, their father descended and sat on a crag close to the eyry. He had no sooner folded his wings than the twin hurled one of his thunderbolts, and the monster tumbled down to the foot of the *mesa* dead. Soon another shower passed, but there was no thunder or lightning, and the mother of the foul brood descended and perched near the nest on a point of rock, whence another well-directed thunderbolt sent her corpse down to the plain to join that of her spouse.

Nag'nazani then took one of the young fledgelings up in his hands, waved it back and forth until it became an eagle, and saying to it: "Thy name shall be *Atsa*," cast it into the air where it spread its wings and flew upwards out of sight. In like manner he metamorphosed all the young ones in the nest into different large birds of prey, and gave to each one a name according to its kind.

When he had done all this, he began to think of his own condition. He was standing high up on the side of a perpendicular cliff, from which he could not descend. He gazed downwards and pondered long as to what he should do, when at length, he saw the bat-woman passing behind a point of rock with a basket on her back. He called to her, for an instant she appeared from behind the rock but hid herself again. Four times did he thus call, and three times did she thus trifle with him; but at his fourth call she came out on the plain and asked him what he wanted. When he told her she said: "I will take you down in my basket if you will give me all the feathers of these great birds that you have slain, except the wings, which you may keep to show your people when you go home. You must also go back from the edge of the rock on which you stand, for you must not see how I ascend, and all the time you are in my basket you must keep your eyes shut, for I do not want you to see how I come down." He readily agreed to all her conditions, and in a short while he beheld her standing on the rock beside him. He looked at the basket which hung on her back, and observed that it was suspended by two slender strings which seemed scarcely strong enough to support the weight of the empty basket. He told her he was afraid to sit in it. She bade him fill it with stones, which he did; then she jumped and danced with the basket on her back, but the strings broke not. Thus assured, he shut his eyes, entered the basket and soon felt himself borne slowly and carefully downward. When he was about half way down his curiosity overcome his prudence; he opened his eyes and began at once to fall violently through the air. The bat-woman slapped her blanket backwards striking him over the face, and commanding him to shut his eyes. He obeyed, and, once

more, experienced the sensation of being wafted gently down. When they reached the bottom he plucked the promised feathers from the dead *Tsénáhale*, and filled with them the basket of the bat-woman.

As she started for her home, he said to her: "Do not go in that direction. You must not pass through that bed of (ĩndĩgète) yellow flowers. Take another trail." But she paid no attention to his warning and stepped among the forbidden plants. She heard a flutter at her ear, and a little bird, such as she had never seen before, flew over her shoulder. She took a few more steps—strange little birds in increasing numbers whizzed by her. She looked over her shoulder, and to her astonishment, found that the little birds were coming out of her basket. The feathers of the *Tsénáhale* were undergoing metomorphosis into all sorts of little wrens, warblers, titmice, etc. Giving up her feathers for lost, she turned her attention to giving names to the different kinds of birds as they flew out—names which they bear to this day among the Navajos—until her basket was empty. Thus it was that the little birds were made.

Nagènazani cut off the wings of the dead monsters, and took them home, and once more did his mother dance and rejoice.

The next victim was *Tsétá-hòtsĩl-tháhli*, "He who kicks you down the rock." (I will refer to him as the Ogre, for the sake of brevity.) The young hero walked along the fatal path; as he passed the ogre, the latter kicked at him, but he evaded the kicks and said to his would-be destroyer, "What did you mean by that?" "Oh! I was tired sitting and was only stretching my limbs," replied the ogre. *Nagènazani* turned round and passed the kicker again with the same result. When he had passed the ogre for the fourth time he took out his knife, cut the hair where it grew into the rock, and let the monster fall over the precipice.

Presently he heard a cry coming from beneath, and it occurred to him that the ogre's family must live at the base of the cliff, where they could receive the bodies when they fell, just as the young harpies did. So he went to the bottom of the precipice by a circuitous route, and there he found the children devouring the body of their own father. He took them up, one by one, and cast them from him, as he had done with the young harpies, and they were changed into birds of prey. This time, the trophy he took home, was the ogre's scalp.

The next task which *Nagènazani* essayed was the destruction of the *Binàyē Ahǎ'ni*, the people who lived in the beautiful house, and slew with their glances. He took with him

some salt and his knife, and boldly entered their lodge. They glanced at him but he fell not. They stared at him but he still lived. They stared harder, till their eyes began to protrude from their sockets. Then he threw his salt on the fire; it cracked and sputtered, and some of the atoms, flying from the fire, struck their eyes and blinded them, when they fell an easy prey to the knife. He took home their scalps as trophies.

The only instruments of the first woman's vengeance now left were the followers of *Yéitso*, the giant of San Mateo. They were numerous, and to effect their destruction was no easy task. After a long consultation the twins decided to try to raise a great storm. They took the wind-charm they had received in the house of the sun—this they put in a particular place, designated by the sun, and performed over it dances and incantations. As a result of their devotions, a great tempest arose which uprooted the highest trees, and tossed, as if they were pebbles, the greatest rocks of San Mateo. In this tornado all the followers of *Yéitso* perished.

The twins had now conquered all the enemies of their race. Their task was finished, and in compliance with their father's wishes, they went to his house in the east and returned to him all his weapons. He said to them: "My sons, I have done much for you. I have given you anything you asked for, and you have slain all your enemies. You must do me a favor in return. I want to dwell again with your mother. Take her to the far west, and build for her a lodge there, where I may behold her any evening when my labors are done, and as I am ashamed to look at the faces of her parents, build for them a lodge in the far east beyond where I live." The twins did as they were bidden, and ever since that time it has been the custom among the Navajos, for the man to shun the presence of his wife's mother.

Before they departed they said to the father. "There are few people on the earth now. How shall we repeople it? "Your mother," he replied, "knows that as well as I do. Go back to her and tell her to make men."

When they returned to their mother they told her the commands of the sun. She took some white corn, ground it, and laid it in a pile on the floor, then she made an equal quantity of meal of yellow corn and laid it in a separate pile. Next she took some dust from her right breast and put it into the white meal, and some dust from her left breast and put it into the yellow meal, and she moulded with water the white meal into the form of a man and the yellow meal into the form of a woman. She laid the images side by side, covered them with a

blanket to keep them warm, and watched them all night, singing and praying over them. Occasionally she raised the blanket and looked to see how her work progressed. When morning dawned, they received the breath of life, arose, went forth, and were thenceforward man and wife. The Navajos call the white corn "male corn," and the yellow "female corn," to this day.

In four days from her creation the woman bore a girl, in four days more a boy. In four days more these grew to maturity, and in another short period of four days found themselves parents. And so rapidly did the generations increase in these cycles of four days, that the earth was soon populous again, but not so populous as it had been.

Estsanatlehi built four large stone pueblos at the four corners of the world for all these people to live in, and she divided them into gentes and gave names to each division. But all the gentes of the Navajos did not then exist. After this she went as the sun had directed, to live in the distant west. When she went west she concluded to make some more men and women to increase the tribe. She made four of each sex from corn of different colors as she had done before, but this time she scratched the skin from her breasts to mix with the meal. She sent these eight to the Navajo country, and with them a bear, a puma and a wild-cat to hunt for them and protect them from their enemies. The people were the ancestors of the Navajo gentes.

The celebrated twins went to a place called Tho-hyět'-li, the junction of the two rivers in the valley of the San Juan, where their images may yet be seen reflected in the waters. They still dwell in a mountain cavern near this place.

Before *Estsanatlehi* departed from her western home she said: "I will always be a friend to the Navajos, and will send them everything that is for their good." Every year her promise is fulfilled; for is it not from the west that the snow comes in the winter, the warm thawing breezes in the spring, and the soft rains in the summer to nourish the corn in the valleys and the grass on the hills? Therefore, it is that when we are in need we pray to *Estsanatlehi*, the Goddess of the Sunset Land.

But first man and first woman were angry because they were banished to the east, and before they left they swore undying hatred and enmity to our people. And for this reason all evils come from the east, small-pox and other diseases, war, and the white intruder.



